

Teachers continue putting Standards into action

Participating teachers – spring 2012

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NNLC: Mike Cronmiller, Patricia Peterman,

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Multicultural Center created standards-based instructional resources designed to engage instructors and students with the most important ideas, questions, and skills related to Nevada's Adult Basic Education ESL Content Standards for reading (<http://nvedu.org/contentstandards>).

Teachers from Truckee Meadows Community College and from the Northern Nevada Literacy Council carried the ball further from February through June: TMCC worked with the ESL Content Standards for reading, and NNLC did the ABE Standards for reading, writing, and math.

The teachers developed hundreds of lesson activities and units of study, which will be posted at www.NevadaAdultEducation.org for all to use. But perhaps as important as product were the benefits of the teamwork process.

Several participants indicated the project created a shared vision within their program: "I know what my students have learned in the previous level; I know exactly what standards to cover, and what they are supposed to know when exiting my class." And, "At first, working with Standards was strange to me. ... at the end of our journey we became a well-rounded group that can excel in all upcoming areas of this project."

Several indicated it changed their thinking: "Being a part of this project has been an eye-opener for me because it gave me a different viewpoint on how creating standards affect the outcome of a student's learning." And, "Learning about the Nevada's Standards has brought me a new view of how I can plan my lessons to provide my students with high quality instruction. I have been integrating the CASAS competencies in all my lessons. However, by including the Standards in my lessons I can make sure that I am teaching the skills my students need to develop in order for them to advance in their career goals." And, "I had wanted to make changes to my teaching before participating in this project, but I wasn't sure how. This project helped me make those changes."

Several mentioned specifics, e.g., "Working on this project has taught me a lot about developing curriculum standards." And, "I have learned to use Bloom's Taxonomy to address language learning objectives better: *'Just giving knowledge is not enough and we have to take it to other levels of cognition.'*"

In 2010, Nevada was one of seven states chosen to participate in Standards in Action, a project designed to promote state-level institutionalization of adult education content standards and standards-based education reform. Through calendar 2011, teachers from the College of Southern Nevada and from Community

The SIA process includes:

- unpacking each Standard,
- aligning each Standard to the programs' resources,
- creating lesson activities,
- creating lesson units of study,
- determining lead and supporting Standards,
- observing peers teaching lessons they developed, and
- collaborating with one another to add more rigor to the developed lessons.

"I watched in amazement as these teachers came to each meeting totally focused on their assignments. I saw a tremendous amount of growth in their teaching practice over the five months and witnessed first-hand how sustained work on a project allows qualitative time for teachers to reflect, practice what they are learning, and often change their paradigm about best practice." —Claudia Bianca

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It's all about community

By Cindy Ainsworth, cainsworth2271@att.net, 775/240-2247



Emelie Williams from Food Bank of Northern Nevada talked about the many volunteer activities available to NNLC students.

As part of [Northern Nevada Literacy Council](#)'s commitment to providing English Literacy/Civics instruction to its students, the organization recently held a Community Awareness Week. English Language Learner, Multicultural Adult Basic Skills, and GED Transitional classes gathered together to find out what resources are available to them and how they can participate in their communities. Presenters focused on community volunteerism and included representatives from the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, Washoe County Library, Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (KTMB), and Washoe County Health District Public Health Preparedness.

Students and instructors found the presentations informative and useful! For example, Christi Cakirogly from KTMB had an excellent power point presentation showing the results of people dumping trash in the Truckee Meadows foothills. It was shocking! As student Merita Najera commented, "In my opinion it is really important to recycle tires, plastic bags, metal, and trash. It is the best example for future generations."

Jeff Whitesides from the Washoe County Health District explained what should be included in a family emergency kit. Students such as Bella Sanchez found this most helpful, "After your speech, I know what kind of things I need and also what papers I need to take with me."

Emelie Williams' talk on the Food Bank encouraged our students to take the first step to volunteering in our community. Many were especially interested in the Summer Food Service Program. "What you do is very beautiful, helping our



NNLC students eagerly gather brochures about volunteer opportunities.

community and all the people in need. That inspires me to help in the future," said Maria Morales. Students Hiep Tran and Raymond Wilson

thanked the organization for

feeding the children in our community. Students were eager to step up and volunteer for this very important organization.

The library presentation by Jennifer Oliver and Beate Weinert walked students through the library's on-site and online services. Students learned that many of the online programs can be used at home to help with their ESL studies and were excited that the library offered computer classes. Many plan to attend the

English conversation hour held at the Sparks Library. There were even several inquiries about applying for a library card.

These local organizations were delighted to speak and provide materials and information; they gave our students an important lesson in community awareness. NNLC highly recommends this activity for all adult education organizations!

"Thank you for helping our community. It is good to know there are angels like you helping out! I really appreciate what all the people at the Food Bank do for our community. I learned a way to help others, thanks to your presentation. I look forward to helping out with my donations." —Alejandra Ornelas

Our heartfelt thanks and Godspeed to Vicki Newell, who recently retired as NNLC's Executive Director after nearly 20 years of dedicated service. Angelina Chamalé is serving as Interim Director; she can be reached at Angelina@nnlc.org, 775/356-1007.

Standards in action *(Continued from page 1)*

And, "While creating activities, we determined to commit more class time to student online access to such sites as Nevada Career Information Systems (NVCIS), Career Clusters, Nevada Workforce Informer (DETR), and, to the [Integrating Career Awareness \(ICA\) curriculum](#) on the [Nevada Adult Education site](#)."

TMCC volunteered to complete all levels of the ESL Content Standards in writing, listening, and speaking this fall. Catholic Charities will begin work on all subject areas of all levels of the ESL Standards and align them to Ventures.

For more information, contact Project Leader Claudia Bianca (cbianca@tmcc.edu, 775/824-8604).

Keep them interested — and working at home

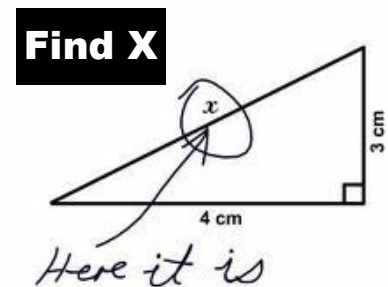
by CSN GED Instructor Noreen Tabb-Martin (702/646-5699, tchu2da@cox.net)

Although education has changed considerably over the years, some things remain the same: How do you get your students to complete and submit homework assignments? Whether your students are 18 or 60 years of age, they must be motivated to follow through with homework completion. So I make homework a fun game. As a result, I not only receive all the assignments, but students ask for more! This has challenged me to create more interesting assignments that are not only fun, but teach lessons of their own.



For the past 14 years I have taught GED prep classes at the College of Southern Nevada's Sahara West Center. I have taught English as well as math. Keeping students interested is a challenge in itself; as a result, I assign a project for each term, for each subject area I am teaching. Here are a few of the projects I have used to teach math and English and sustain the students' interest in the subject area.

- To learn math tables, have students cut up a table sheet of facts (one table per strip), then paste them on the refrigerator, on the bathroom mirror, above the pillow on the headboard, etc. Instruct students that prior to eating, sleeping, or washing their faces, they should recite the table strip. The tables are quickly said and soon learned.
- Look through the Sunday cartoons. Find any that mention math, then explain what the characters are doing.
- Write a math rap telling of the difficult areas of math that challenge you.
- Define 75 math vocabulary terms on 3x5 note cards. Use them as a definition game or math Jeopardy at the end of the term to see what the students have really learned.
- List uses for math in employment; put them on 3x5 note cards.
- Find 40 different ways math can be used, e.g., measuring square feet of carpet to cover a room or pounds per square inch of body weight on a mattress.
- Make a list of the negative things that have come from the struggling economy. Relate them to math, e.g., lost job = no income.
- Find five good challenging math problems. Solve them.
- Pick a year from 1900-1980; look up the cost of various items and compare them to today's cost. Give the % increase in price.
- Choose a year-in-review summary. Find out how many events relate to math and tell why they are important. Do the same for English, social studies, and science. Tell why these events are important and how you have benefited by these events.
- To learn English, have students create their own cards, design stationary and note cards, or write general thank you notes anyone could use.



Ocular Trauma - by Wade Clarke ©2005

Projects such as these help students learn correct English, proper writing style, and vocabulary. I try hard to cover all areas of education!

Many times, students will come to me and ask if they can do special projects. As long as projects pertain to classroom material, I am happy to let them dive in. Having students do short presentations the week before the final exam is especially effective.

I believe teachers should never assign projects to students that they haven't done themselves. So when a student says, "That's too hard, bet you wouldn't do it!" I pull out my own completed projects. I recite my rap for them, show them binders of math and English projects, and hand them a box of vocabulary cards for math and English. Then I tell them my philosophy, "I would never ask you to do anything I wouldn't do." That proves I am a "real person" and truly interested in their success. You will get more than homework assignments. You will get a cooperative class who will learn what they need to know to be successful.

Keep your students interested and they will succeed in class, get their GEDs, and become contributing members of society. All you need is a dash of creativity!

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High-priority solutions for scarcity



In July, the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL, www.caalusa.org) released *[In A Time Of Scarce Resources: Near Term Priorities In Adult Education](#)*. This 34-page report (plus appendices) supports recommendations of the National Commission on Adult Literacy's 2008 report *[Reach Higher, America](#)*, which makes the case that the United States cannot fully meet its economic and social needs in the 21st century unless and until it transforms the present adult education system into a more effective and coordinated adult education and workforce development system.

"*Scarce Resources*" presents the results of a survey project in which more than two dozen adult education and literacy leaders responded in depth to a series of questions having to do with highest priority next steps for the adult education field. "The key to progress in an environment of limited resources is to establish clear priorities for change," wrote authors Forrest Chisman and Gail Spangenberg. "If adult educators and other stakeholders in the field can focus the resources they have on a discrete number of fairly specific measures, they should be able to 'move the needle' toward comprehensive change."

The main section of the paper discusses four consensus or near-consensus areas of high priority importance: high intensity/managed enrollment instructional models, professional/staff development, use of technology, and creative funding. The other major section of the paper presents a menu of ideas more general and varied in nature, including discussion of whether to articulate core curriculum standards to the new GED.



The Southern Nevada Chapter of California TESOL has launched a new Web site at <http://catesolsnv.org/>. There you will find information on the fall conference to be held October 19-20 at the West Charleston Campus of the College of Southern Nevada. Check it out!